



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF COORDINATOR OF FISHERIES

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The rejuvenated New England fishing fleet is expected to bring to port this year the largest catch of fish since the record 1941 landings and may even establish a new record for fishery production, according to a report received today by Coordinator of Fisheries Harold L. Ickes.

Predictions are based largely on the fact that the New England fleet, recently depleted by loss of many of its most productive boats to the military services, has now been restored approximately to its pre-war catching capacity, Coordinator Ickes said. Although many of its large trawlers are still carrying freight and doing other war service in distant parts of the world, many of the small and medium trawlers have been returned to the industry and a number of newl constructed boats are being added to the fleet.

Catches of New England fish, including haddock, cod, rosefish, flounders, hakes, and other species, now at the lowest point of the year because of severe weather conditions on the fishing grounds, will begin to pick up in late February or early March. Especially heavy catches are expected in March and April.

The Coordinator pointed out that an upward trend in production began last year as a result of the activity of boats then added to the fleet. Landings at New England ports in 1944 totaled 430,409,000 pounds, a gain of ten per cent over 1943, when production reached the lowest level in several years.

In 1944 Gloucester received the largest volume of fish in its history, and for the second consecutive year took the lead among New England ports. Landings at Gloucester totaled 187,632,000 pounds or 43 per cent of the New England total. Boston, in second place, received 151,208,000 pounds.

New Bedford also handled a record volume of seafood. The fast growing southern New England port received 74,451,000 pounds of fish and shellfish -- twice as much as in 1940. Portland's landings, on the other hand, were the smallest in several years, totaling 17,118,000.